Niftylift, Hoyland

Bat and Bird Survey Report

9th April 2024

Prepared by:

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Contents

1. Summary

1.1.1 Middleton Bell Ecology Ltd were commissioned to produce a Preliminary Roost Assessment of a section of the Niftylift premises at their Hoyland factory by Brendan Foster of JHA Architecture Ltd on behalf of the client on 2nd April 2024.

1.1.2 The survey was undertaken to inform proposals to construct an extension to the existing factory on its northwest elevation.

1.1.3 Bat survey works detailed in this report include a desk-based study and an internal and external visual inspection, undertaken on 5th April 2024.

1.1.4 No evidence of bats was recorded from the surveyed section of building and it was considered to display a negligible level of bat roost suitability.

1.1.5 No further bat survey effort is necessary, providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works are to commence after this date, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey.

1.1.6 Works should proceed with caution and vigilance for unexpected bat presence, as single bats can roost almost anywhere. If bats are subsequently discovered, work should cease, and further advice sought without delay.

1.1.7 Bat roosting and swift nesting enhancement measures have been recommended.

2. Introduction

2.1.1 Middleton Bell Ecology Ltd were commissioned to produce a Preliminary Roost Assessment of a section of the Niftylift premises at their Hoyland factory by Brendan Foster of JHA Architecture Ltd on behalf of the client on 2nd April 2024.

2.1.2 The survey was undertaken to inform proposals to construct an extension to the existing factory on its northwest elevation (Application Reference: 2023/0853). The proposed elevations plan is included in Appendix 1.

2.1.3 Bat survey works detailed in this report included a desk-based study and an internal and external visual inspection.

2.1.4 The site was located in Platts Common Industrial Estate on the northern edge of Hoyland approximately 5.2 km southeast of Barnsley.

3. Habitat Assessment

3.1.1 The surveyed section of building was located on the edge of an industrial estate, approximately 170 m southeast of an A-Road (Dearne Valley Parkway). Bordering the industrial estate c. 25 m northwest of the surveyed building was a c. 3 ha area of mixed grassland, scrub and woodland. This area comprises higher quality bat foraging habitat. Further higher quality bat foraging habitat in the wider area included a large pond 330 m northwest of the site and an extended area of woodland 780 m northwest of the site.

3.1.2 Artificial light levels around the industrial site appeared to be high. As a result it was anticipated that a low-moderate density of bats belonging to a limited range of species was likely to use adjacent habitats.

Table 1. Location and habitat table

Name and address: Niftylift, Platts Common Industrial Estate, Mason Way, Hoyland, Barnsley S74 9TF			
O.S. Grid Ref.: SE 36812 01488		Altitude: 152 m	
Local Planning Authority: Barnsley Council			
Features on site and adjacent to site			
Feature	On site	Adjacent	Comments
Buildings	✔	✔	Located within an industrial estate
River			
Standing water			Pond 330 m northwest of site
Bridges tunnels and culverts			
Trees		✔	Nearest tree c. 25 m northwest of building in woodland block bordering wider premises
Woodland			
Grassland		✔	Nearest grassland c. 25 m from building

Figure 1. Surveyed section of Niftylift premises indicated by red circle

3.2 Aims

3.2.1 The survey was conducted to help determine the following:

- The presence/likely absence of roosting bats.
- Suitable bat roosting areas and access/egress points into the building.
- The level of bat roost potential associated with the building.
- The number and species of bat roosting within the building.
- The further bat survey work or mitigation requirements.
- The presence of any evidence of bird nesting from site building.

4. Methodology

4.1 Data Consultation

4.1.1 No bat records were requested from either Barnsley Biological Records Centre or South Yorkshire Bat Group, given the negligible level of bat roost suitability displayed by the surveyed building.

4.1.2 A search of the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was undertaken to identify historic European Protected Species (EPS) licences obtained for locations within 2 km of the site.

4.2 Field Survey

Preliminary Roost Assessment

4.2.1 The preliminary roost assessment survey was undertaken by Robert Bell (MCIEEM; Class license WML-A34-Level 4, 2016-25236-CLS-CLS) on 5th April 2024.

4.2.2 The survey undertaken was restricted to the northwest end of the existing factory and adjoining sections of the northeast and southwest elevations (each approximately 25 m in length (see Figure 2). These comprised the only sections of the existing factory potentially impacted by the proposed extension.

Figure 2. Sections of Niftylift factory subject to survey, as indicated in red

4.2.3 The following activities were carried out during the surveys in compliance with relevant Bat Survey Guidelines (Collins 2016):

- A brief inspection and assessment of the site and habitats present to within 300m.
- An extensive examination of all parts of the building both inside and out to record structural features and condition and to record features that may be suitable for roosting bats. Particular attention was paid to any crevices or gaps in walls, lintels, gaps between beams and joists and to the possibility of finding droppings stuck to walls, floors or other surfaces, or insect remains below beams, among a number of other factors. All signs indicative of the presence of a bat roost, including live or dead bats, droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and staining were recorded.
- An assessment of the building's bat roost potential (negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed roost).

4.2.4 In addition, any signs of nesting bird usage of the building were recorded.

4.2.5 The following equipment was used or at hand during the survey:

- Clulight
- Binoculars
- Endoscope
- Ladders
- Camera

4.3 Survey Limitations

4.3.1 Signs of bat presence deposited on the exterior of the building during the bat activity survey season would likely have been removed by weather action prior to the survey being undertaken. It is nevertheless an acceptable time to undertake preliminary roost assessments (Collins, 2023) and it is considered that a thorough assessment of the building's bat roost potential was possible.

5. Results

5.1 Data Consultation

5.1.1 No bat records were requested from either Barnsley Biological Records Centre or South Yorkshire Bat Group, given the negligible level of bat roost suitability displayed by the surveyed building.

5.1.2 No bat EPS mitigation licences had been issued for locations within 2 km of the site.

5.2 Field Survey

Preliminary Roost Assessment

5.2.1 No evidence of bat roosting was recorded from the surveyed section of building. The surveyed section of building displayed a negligible level of suitability for current usage by roosting bats.

Description

5.2.2 The surveyed section of building was mainly constructed between 2018-2020. It comprised a large steel framed section of factory with corrugated metal sheet cladding and a multi-pitched corrugated metal sheet covered roof (Plates 1-4). Wall construction comprised two sheets, with a corrugated metal outer sheet and a c.3 cm insulated inner metal sheet. The building was accessed via large roller shutter doors and security lighting was installed at half wall height across all elevations. It was reported that the security lighting was lit for the full night.

External bat roost potential

5.2.3 No potential roost features were recorded from the building exterior.

Internal inspection

5.2.4 The roof was suspended on a steel frame and lacked any roof void (Plate 5). The interior of the building was in active 24 hour use. No evidence of bats was recorded from any location on the surveyed building.

Plate 1. Northern corner of Niftylift premises with northwest elevation (to be extended) on right of image

Plate 2. Western corner of Niftylift premises with northwest elevation (to be extended) on left of image

Plate 3. Looking up at cladding on northwest elevation

Plate 4. Close view of corner cladding pieces fixing to main cladding panels

Plate 5. Interior of factory adjacent to northwestern end (to be extended)

6. Assessment

6.1 Summary and Evaluation of Findings

6.1.1 No signs of bat presence were recorded from the surveyed building. The surveyed section of building was considered to display a negligible level of suitability for bat usage.

6.1.2 No evidence of bird nesting was recorded from the site.

6.2 Legislation and Policy Guidance

Bats

6.2.1 Bats receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

6.2.2 It is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection or obstruct access to any such place.
- Damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat.
- Possess a bat (live or dead), or any part of a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
- Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (dead or alive), or parts of parts.

6.2.3 The Convention on Biological Diversity, signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, requires member states to develop national strategies and to undertake a range of actions aimed at maintaining or restoring biodiversity. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the Convention.

6.2.4 In England & Wales, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, "to have due regard, as far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity". It notes that "conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat". Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared bat, greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* are included as priority species within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. At a more local level there are Local Biodiversity Action Plans for smaller geographical areas which may cover a greater or lesser range of bat species.

6.2.5 Where it is proposed to carry out works which will have an adverse impact on roosting bats, the site must either be registered on the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) or a European Protected Species (EPS) license must first be obtained from Natural England. This requirement applies even if no bats are expected to be present when the work is carried out.

6.2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework for England was revised in 2023. This document states that plans should 'promote the conservation, restoration and

enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity'.

Birds

6.2.7 All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird.

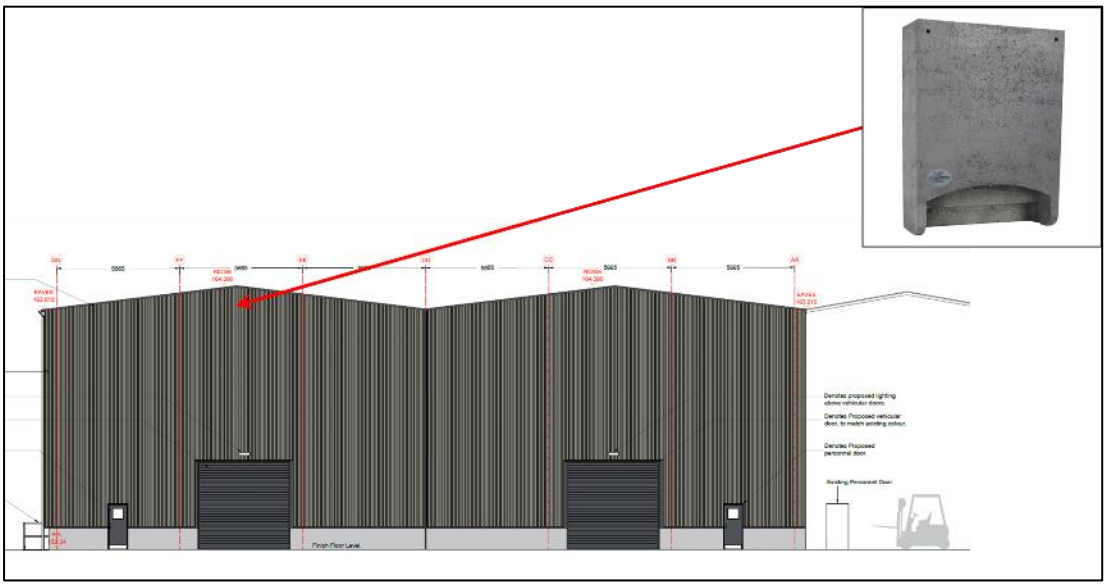
6.3 Further Survey, Recommendations and Enhancements

Bats

6.3.1 No further bat survey is considered necessary providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works commence after this time, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey works to be undertaken.

6.3.2 No bats were recorded roosting on site during the survey works and consequently there is no compulsory requirement for mitigation. However, in order to enhance the ecological value of the site and in accordance with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), it is suggested that one new bat roosting feature be either incorporated within the building walls or attached to them. A suitable design of bat box to install on the exterior of the new building would comprise the Lela Bat Box (Figure 3). This could be fitted on the new southwest facing section of the extension. This box should be fitted at wall top height, which will be well above the security lighting.

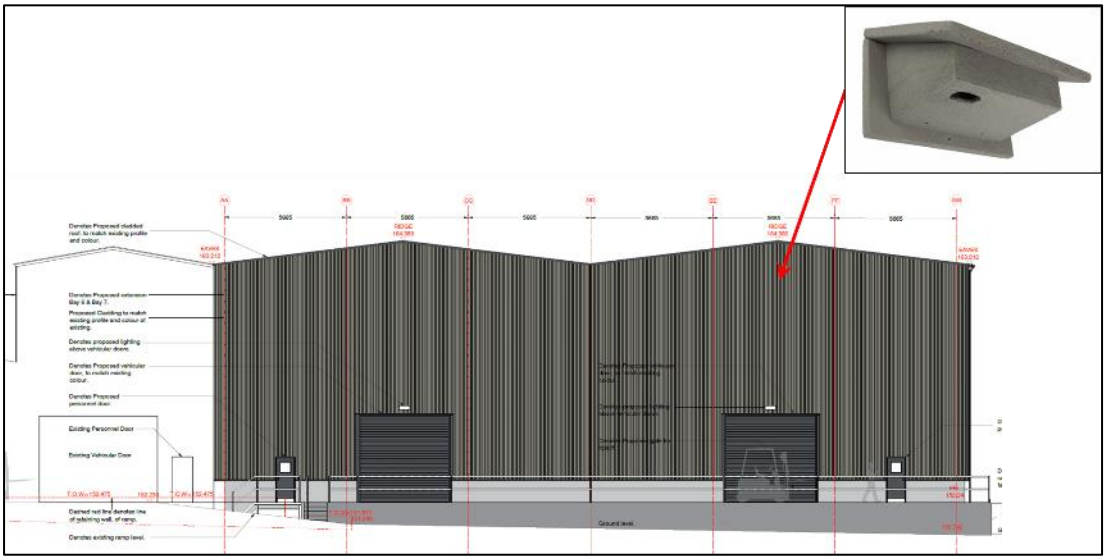
Figure 3. Proposed bat box location



Birds

6.3.2 In accordance with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework, and to compensate for the loss of bird nesting habitat, it is recommended that one swift *Apus apus* box is fitted to new extension on the northeast elevation. This box should be fitted at wall top height. A suitable design of box would comprise the Vivara Pro WoodStone Swift Nest Box. Studies have shown that swift boxes are used by other bird species that utilise buildings and consequently this measure will provide potential nesting space for house sparrows *Passer domesticus* and starlings *Sturnus vulgaris*, in addition to potentially providing future nest space for swift.

Figure 4. Proposed bird box location



6.4 Conclusions

6.4.1 No evidence of bat presence was recorded in association with the surveyed building during the visual inspection. It is considered that the survey work undertaken has demonstrated the probable absence of roosting bats from the building to be impacted by the proposed scheme.

6.4.2 No further survey effort is necessary, providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works are to commence after this date, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey.

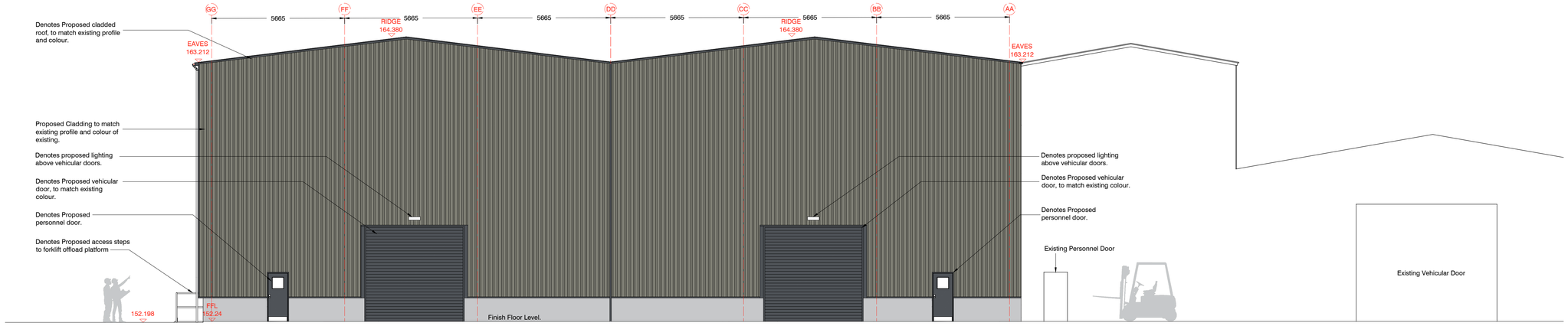
6.4.3 Works should proceed with caution and vigilance for unexpected bat presence, as single bats can roost almost anywhere. If bats are subsequently discovered, work should cease, and further advice sought without delay.

6.4.4 Bat roosting and bird nesting enhancement measures have been recommended.

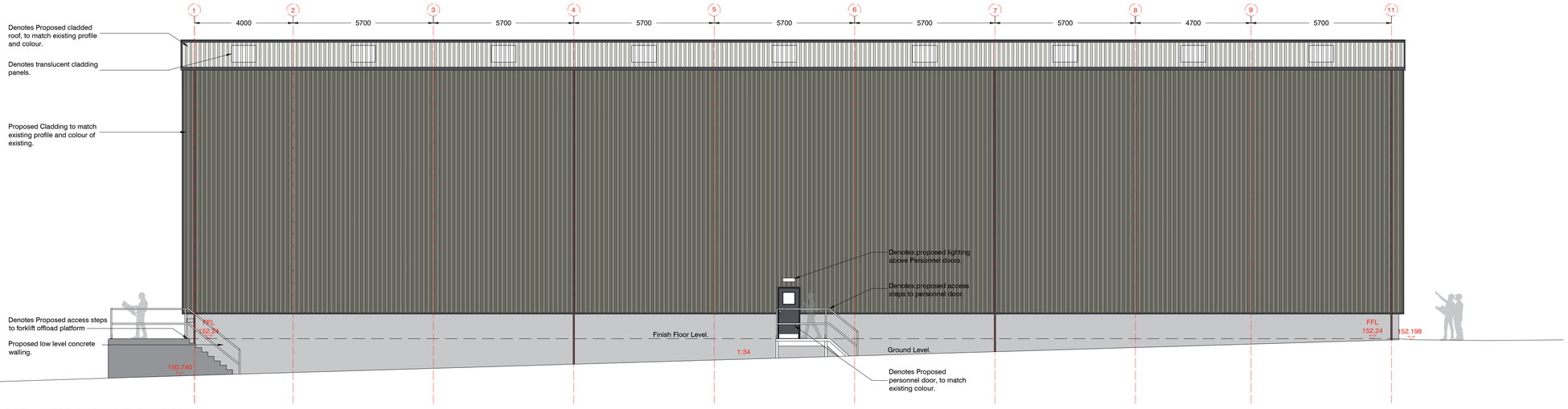
7. References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust

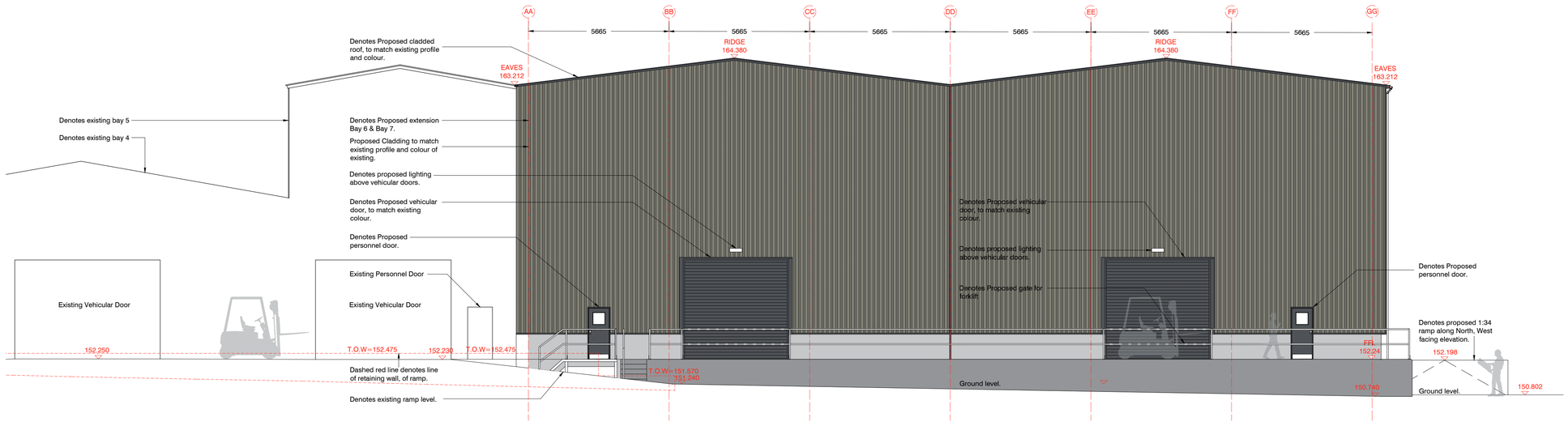
Appendix 1. Proposed Elevation



PROPOSED SOUTH WEST FACING ELEVATION
1:100



PROPOSED NORTH WEST FACING ELEVATION
1:100



PROPOSED NORTH, EAST FACING ELEVATION
1:100

PLEASE NOTE

1. DO NOT scale from this drawing, use figured dimensions only.
2. All dimensions to be checked on site by the contractor.
3. Please report any discrepancies to JHA Ltd immediately.
4. All setting out dimensions are approximate. To be marked out on site for approval by JHA Ltd prior to construction.

NOTES:

Ref	Date	Revision	Initial
*	01/09/23	FIRST ISSUE	BF

Issue:

PLANNING ISSUE

Project / Client:

PROPOSED EXTENSION "BAY 6 & 7"
TO NIFTY LIFTS FOR
NIFTY LIFTS - BARNSLEY.

Drawing Title:

PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

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Drawing No:	Sheet Size:
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